United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1024
22 November 1991

F R I D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- Security Council votes unanimously to recommend Boutros Boutros Ghali of Egypt as new United Nations Secretary-General. Assembly President welcomes recommendation saying it is "deserved and timely".

- Germany requests urgent meeting of Security Council on situation in Yugoslavia.

- Secretary-General holds talks with Italian Foreign Minister on situation in Yugoslavia, and in Cyprus, as well as on recent developments concerning El Salvador.

- Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Cyrus Vance, continues talks with Yugoslav parties.

- Secretary-General expresses hope that momentum generated by Madrid peace talks on Middle East will be sustained and that lasting peace will become a reality.

- International Committee of the Red Cross announces arrival of its first relief ship in Dubrovnik; second ICRC freighter carrying more than 265 tonnes of relief supplies due to arrive tomorrow.

- Under-Secretary-General refutes charges of alleged misuse of funds of United Nations Humanitarian Relief Operation in Afghanistan.

- Social Committee hears urgent appeal by Haiti to international community to end "unprecedented" human rights violations in that country.

- French Prime Minister calls for mobilization of all efforts to combat crime at United Nations ministerial meeting in Versailles.

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The Security Council decided last night to recommend Boutros Boutros Ghali of Egypt to succeed Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar as the new Secretary-General of the United Nations.

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For information media—not an official record

During its closed private meeting, the Council adopted unanimously a resolution which read: "The Security Council, having considered the question of the recommendation for the appointment of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, recommends to the General Assembly that Boutros Boutros Ghali be appointed Secretary-General of the United Nations for a term of office from 1 January 1992 to 31 December 1996."

The 69-year old Egyptian Deputy Prime Minister would be the first Arab and the first African to hold the post of Secretary-General. The 166-member General Assembly will have to endorse the Council's recommendation at a date not yet set.

This morning, the President of the Council, Aurel Dragos Munteanu of Romania, called on the Assembly President and officially conveyed the Council's unanimous decision.

Also in a statement today, Assembly President Samir S. Shihabi of Saudi Arabia expressed his great pleasure and satisfaction in receiving the recommendation. He said the choice, which he called "well deserved and timely", was "a tribute to the role of Africa, the Arab world, and Egypt in the United Nations and in the international arena". He would give Mr. Ghali his full support, he said.

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Germany has requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council regarding the situation in Yugoslavia. The request was transmitted yesterday in a letter signed by the Permanent representative of Germany to the United Nations, Detlev Grav Zu Rantzau.

British Ambassador Sir David Hannay said last week that the European Community members of the Council were preparing a draft resolution on the situation in Yugoslavia. He made the comment to the press following a briefing by the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance, who had just returned from his second mission to Yugoslavia.

Sir David Hannay said the draft text included efforts to seek a lasting cease-fire; to reinforce the humanitarian efforts; to strengthen the arms embargo, including the imposition of an oil embargo; and to explore international involvement in keeping the peace in Yugoslavia.

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On the first day of his official visit to Italy, the Secretary-General held talks today in Rome with Italian Foreign Minister Gianni de Michelis with whom he discussed the situation in Yugoslavia, and in Cyprus, as well as the recent developments concerning El Salvador.

Tomorrow, the Secretary-General will have a private audience at the Vatican with his Holiness Pope John Paul II.

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Earlier today, the Secretary-General congratulated over the telephone Mr. Boutros Boutros Ghali, whose appointment as his successor was recommended last night to the General Assembly by the Security Council, and expressed to Mr. Boutros Ghali his full support and cooperation in the future. During their conversation, the Secretary-General and Mr. Ghali discussed plans for the transition period and the possible schedule for the necessary briefings they will go through pending the Assembly's decision.

The Secretary-General will leave Italy for Madrid on Sunday, 24 November, for a three-day official visit to Spain before travelling to Paris on Wednesday, 27 November.

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Continuing his talks with Yugoslav parties, the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance, was scheduled to meet today with Mr. Babic, Leader of the Serb Communities in Knin Krajina.

Mr. Vance is in Yugoslavia on a third mission, accompanied by Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding and a United Nations team, in an effort to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in that country.

Yesterday, Mr. Vance and his team met with President Izetbegovic of Bosnia-Hercegovina in Sarajevo, and with Mr. Hadjic, Leader of the Serbian community in eastern Slavonia.

Mr. Vance's mission will continue over the weekend.

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The Secretary-General has stated that given his enduring commitment to peace in Middle East he wants to pay tribute to the historic peace conference in Madrid which opened on 30 October. He made the statement in a report to the Security Council, dated 15 November, on the situation in the Middle East

The Secretary-General further expresses hope that the momentum that has been generated by the Madrid peace talks will be sustained and that "the lasting peace that has been denied the peoples of that region will become a reality".

According to the report, there are currently three United Nations peace-keeping forces in the region: The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOP) deployed between the Israeli and Syrian forces on the Golan Hights; the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) mandated to confirm the withdrawal of the Israeli forces as called for by the Security Council; and finally the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization (UNTSO) which operates in Beirut and in Egypt.

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The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has announced the arrival of its first relief ship, "the Rhodos II", on 21 November in Dubrovnik. A second ICRC freighter, the "Dimaratos", carrying more than 265 tonnes of relief supplies on board is due to arrive in the Yugoslav port city tomorrow, 23 November.

According to the ICRC, delegates have already begun to attend to the needs of the wounded and sick in hospitals there. Due to an acute water shortage, ICRC delegates are also engaged in organizing the distribution of drinking water supplies for hospital and city needs.

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Under-Secretary-General J. Richard Foran today refuted press report of alleged misuse of funds of the United Nations Humanitarian Relief Operation in Afghanistan (UNOCA) -- also known as "Operation Salaam".

In a statement through the Secretary-General's Spokeswoman, Mr. Foran said that while it was clear that there were some significant lapses in adherence to established administrative and accounting procedures, no evidence had been found of personal wrongdoing by any staff member of UNOCA. Virtually all the funds, alleged in some press reports to be "missing", had been accounted for, he said. He would present a full report on the operation to the General Assembly's Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions within the next ten days.

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An urgent appeal was made yesterday to the General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) to end the "unprecedented" violations of human rights in Haiti.

The Permanent Representative of Haiti, Fritz Longchamp, made his appeal as the Committee continued its consideration of human rights questions and situations. He said the 30 September coup d'état in Haiti had resulted in human rights violations unprecedented even by the standards of the Duvalier era. He presented a list of human rights violations which, he said, had taken place in Haiti since the coup, including the killing of hundreds of people by the military.

The Haitian representative said the situation was alarming and nothing was being done to prevent the massacre of the civilian population. The "ferocious repression" had had disastrous consequences beyond Haiti's borders, with thousands of people trying to escape through the Caribbean sea. He recalled that over a year ago, the United Nations was supervising the holding of the first democratic elections in Haiti. But, he added, the same situation of insecurity and violations of human rights which had prompted such supervision still remained. Ambassador Longchamps appealed to the international community to live up to its duty to condemn and put an end to those abuses.

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United Nations

Press Release

Department of Public Information • News Coverage Service • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1025
25 November 1991

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Secretary-General proposes establishment of $1 billion United Nations Peace Endowment Fund to help finance United Nations peace-keeping operations -- among other measures to save Organization from "financial disaster".

- Secretary-General says deployment of peace-keeping operation in Yugoslavia can only take place if lasting and effective cease-fire is guaranteed by Yugoslav parties.

- General Assembly calls on Member States to promote zone of peace and cooperation in South Atlantic.

- Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Committee opens three-week session at Geneva.

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In an effort to solve the financial crisis of the United Nations, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has proposed to ask Governments, the private sector and individuals to set up a $1 billion United Nations Peace Endowment Fund to help finance United Nations peace-keeping operations.

In a report to the General Assembly, dated 19 November, the Secretary-General proposed that the Fund be created by a combination of assessed and voluntary contributions. Once the Funds reaches its target level, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said, the proceeds from the investment of its principal would be used to finance the initial costs of authorized peace-keeping operations, as well as other conflict resolution measures and related activities.

In his report, the Secretary-General also asked for permission to charge interest, at commercial rates, to those Member States who have not paid their assessed contributions within 60 days after insurance of a letter of assessment. Interest charges would apply to all assessments, whether for the regular budget, the Working Capital Fund or peace-keeping operations as well as all outstanding contributions.

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In addition, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar recommended that the level of the United Nations Working Capital Fund be raised to $250 million, and that a Peace-Keeping Reserve Fund at a level of $50 million be established to provide initial financing for peace-keeping operations, pending receipt of assessed contributions. A second humanitarian Fund at a level of $50 million would be set up for operations pending receipt of pledged contributions in emergency, humanitarian and disaster relief situations. The Secretary-General also reiterated a request for the Assembly's authorization to borrow commercially when all other sources of internal borrowing have been exhausted.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar stated in his report that it is "a source of profound concern" to him that the same membership which deems it appropriate to entrust the United Nations Secretariat with unprecedented new responsibilities has not taken the necessary action to ensure the minimum financial resources required to carry out those responsibilities. He said that Member States must take prompt and decisive action to resolve what he calls "this perennial, indeed, endemic problem". "Failure to act, promptly and decisively, could lead to financial disaster", the Secretary-General said.

At 31 October, unpaid assessed contributions to the United Nations regular budget totalled $988.1 million, and $463.5 million for the seven peace-keeping operations, not including the projected requirements for the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia (UNAMIC), nor the future operations in Cambodia.

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The Secretary-General said yesterday in Geneva that the dispatch of a United Nations peace-keeping force to Yugoslavia could only take place if the parties agreed to a lasting and effective cease-fire. He emphasized that a peace-keeping operation needed the authorization by the Security Council, the willingness of Member States to contribute contingents, as well as agreement on financing of such an operation.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar made the statement following a meeting on Sunday with Italian Foreign Minister, Gianni de Michelis, and his Personal Envoy, Mr. Cyrus Vance.

The day before, on 23 November, an agreement on an immediate cease-fire was reached at a United Nations meeting in Geneva between the three Yugoslav parties. Convened by Mr. Vance, the meeting was attended by Serbian President Milosevic, Croatian President Tudjman and General Kadijevic, Secretary of State for National Defence of the Federal Army, as well as Lord Carrington, Chairman of the Hague Conference on Yugoslavia, and Under-Secretary-General Marrack Goulding.

The Secretary-General informed the President of the Security Council yesterday, in a letter, of the results of the meeting, calling it "constructive". He stated that each of the Yugoslav parties had welcomed the establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation "as soon as possible". It was agreed, he said, that further defining of the areas where

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such a force should be deployed was needed in order to enable Mr. Vance to make his recommendations.

Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said he had asked Mr. Vance to continue this "important mission", and -- together with Under-Secretary-General Goulding -- to carry forward the work of setting up a United Nations peace-keeping operation in Yugoslavia.

The Security Council met in informal consultations this afternoon to discuss the Secretary-General's letter.

Speaking to correspondents before entering consultations, United Kingdom's Ambassador Sir David Hannay said there was a possibility of a formal meeting this week in order to "give strength to Mr. Vance's hand" as an interim measure. The most important thing now, Mr. Hannay said, was that the Yugoslav parties fulfil the conditions spelled out in Saturday's Geneva Agreement, namely to stand by the cease-fire..

In a related development, the Council of Ministers of the Western European Union (WEU) has expressed its firm support for the efforts of the three European Security Council Member States in favour of a United Nations Security Council resolution concerning a peace-keeping operation in Yugoslavia.

According to a Declaration adopted on 18 November, the WEU Ministers said their countries were ready to give practical support to such an operation as soon as the relevant decisions had been taken.

The Declaration was transmitted in a letter, dated 21 November, to the Council President from the Permanent Representative of Germany, Detlev graf zu Rantzau.

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The General Assembly this morning called upon all States to promote the establishment of the zone of peace and cooperation in the South Atlantic, as called for by the Assembly in 1986.

By a recorded vote of 141 in favour to 1 against (United States), and no abstentions, the Assembly affirmed its determination to preserve the freedom of navigation in the high seas of the region and all other activities protected by international law. All States were urged to abstain from disposing of hazardous, toxic and nuclear wastes within the region. They were also urged not to engage in fishing methods that could have an adverse impact on the management of marine resources in the zone.

Addressing the Assembly, the representative of Brazil, Ronaldo Mota Sardenberg, said his country perceived the zone of peace and cooperation of the South Atlantic as an effective tool to foster development. The common market countries in the southern cone of South America, known as MERCOSUR,

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comprise a population of 180 million. The Treaty establishing the common market would become effective by 31 December 1994 and its implementation would have a favourable and far-reaching impact throughout the zone.

In a separate development, it was announced today that the voting for the new Secretary-General has been set to Tuesday morning, 3 December.

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The Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights today began its three-week session devoted mostly to examine how States parties to the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights live up to their obligations under that Treaty.

The Committee carries out this function through the study of reports from the States parties detailing the measures taken, progress made and difficulties encountered in implementing the Covenant.

During consideration of such reports, representatives of specialized agencies may make statements on the progress accomplished in the States parties concerned in implementing the provisions of the Covenant falling within the scope of their activities. A number of these agencies, such as the International Labour Organization (ILO), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) have been invited to send representatives to the Committee's meetings.

The Committee will also discuss preparatory activities relating to the World Conference on Human Rights, to be held in Berlin in 1993.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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DH/1026
26 November 1991

TUESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Sadruddin Aga Khan tells press conference in Geneva that Iraqi Government has agreed to extend April accords on United Nations humanitarian operation; calls for "maximum restraint" to allow negotiations towards political solution.

- Secretary-General, on official visit to Spain, holds talks with Spanish Prime Minister on variety of issues.

- United Nations expert team concludes discussions with Iraqi authorities on destruction of chemical weapons.

- Social Committee is told of "horrifying" human rights violations in Yugoslavia; is also told that United Nations must take up "massacre of innocent civilians" by Indonesian forces in East Timor.

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The Secretary-General's Executive Delegate for Humanitarian Assistance to Iraq, Sadruddin Aga Khan, told a press conference today in Geneva that an agreement had been reached with the Iraqi Government to extend until 30 June 1992, the Memorandum of Understanding providing for United Nations humanitarian operation in that country, which was signed by Iraq on 18 April.

The Executive Delegate was briefing the press on meetings held last week in Baghdad with Iraqi Ministers on the future of the United Nations humanitarian activities in Iraq.

He said certain clarifications had been introduced in the new agreement with regard to the effective implementation of the humanitarian programme's objective and the return of the majority of displaced persons from the neighbouring countries.

Referring to recent events in northern Iraq, Sadruddin Aga Khan called for "maximum restraint", so that negotiations towards a political solution could move forward without further armed conflict, and the displaced population be permitted to return to their homes at the earliest opportunity.

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For information media—not an official record

The deployment of the United Nations Guards Contingent in Iraq, he said, had provided invaluable support to the humanitarian operation as a stabilizing element in a difficult situation. Calling the Guards "innovative and enterprising", he urged that they be maintained in the interest of the humanitarian programme as well as the Iraqi population. Agreement has been reached with the Iraqis for the continued assignment of the Guards Contingent.

On the question of Iraqi petroleum production and export, Sadruddin Aga Khan said that despite Security Council resolutions allowing oil sales to the amount of 1.6 billion to fund humanitarian imports, no export of oil had yet taken place. He called on all concerned to find realistic means for the resumption of exports of Iraqi petroleum. If the impasse persisted "the ultimate losers will be the Iraqi people", he said.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar met yesterday with the Prime Minister of Spain, Felipe Gonzalez, in Madrid, with whom he discussed a variety of issues dealing with the situation in Yugoslavia, the Middle East, Western Sahara, and Central America, in particular El Salvador.

On Saturday, 23 November, the Secretary-General addressed the Conference of Pontifical Council in Rome on the subject of international efforts against drug abuse. He said the United Nations International Drug Control Programme had received a new mandate by the General Assembly which was both ambitious and realistic. This new Mandate should serve as reference point in the conduct of concerted international efforts against the drug menace, he said.

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A United Nations chemical weapons team has concluded a week of detailed discussions with its Iraqi counterparts to refine plans for the destruction of Iraq's chemical weapons capability.

While in Iraq, the team reviewed an Iraqi proposal for a mustard agent incinerator and concluded that modifications would be required. Similarly, the two sides agreed on a pilot programme to test a process for eliminating nerve agents by caustic hydrolysis. The United Nations experts discussed modifications to the pilot plant, which could eventually lead to a full-scale facility at the Muthanna site. Those modifications were accepted, paving the way for agreement on procedures for getting a United Nations approved pilot programme under way.

The United Nations is considering other possible approaches to the destruction of mustard and nerve agents, including ones with less significant Iraqi involvement. A final decision would be made after all factors, particularly safety, have been assessed.

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The representative of Hungary, Gyula K. Szelei, said this morning that the grave, flagrant and systematic rights violations, which he said were being committed on a "horrifying scale" in Yugoslavia, could not be ignored by the United Nations. He called on the Organization to establish a mechanism to monitor that situation with a view to promoting respect for rights.

Speaking in the General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) debate on human rights questions and situations, Mr. Szelei said a multilateral approach to common problems, including violations of universally recognized human rights, would be most effective.

In the case of Yugoslavia, Mr. Szelei said the right to self-determination, as stipulated in numerous international instruments, had been impaired, adding that the right to life was being violated. He said the exercise of free assembly was met by indiscriminate force and the rights of minorities, including one-half million Hungarians living in Yugoslavia, were being violated.

Meanwhile, other human rights violations including the November 12 "massacre of innocent civilians" by Indonesian security forces in East Timor, have also been brought before the Committee. The representative of Cape Verde, Jose Luis Jesus, said his Government condemned the East Timor incident, in which more than one hundred civilians had been killed or wounded, and called it "another painful episode in the uncertain predicament in which the East Timorese people found themselves".

In a related development, Cape Verde, Angola, Guinea Bissau, Mozambique and Sao Tome and Principe have requested the Secretary-General, in a letter dated 20 November, to renew his efforts towards finding a peaceful solution to the conflict in East Timor. They also called for an inquiry into the facts by the Human Rights Commission.

The five countries stated that East Timor is a question of decolonization and emphasized the United Nations responsibility in the creation of "conditions and mechanisms" to ensure the free exercise of the right to self-determination and independence by the people of East Timor.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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DH/1027
27 November 1991

WEDNESDAY HIGHLIGHTS

- Security Council urges Yugoslav parties to comply fully with agreement on immediate cease-fire, signed in Geneva, 23 November; will take up question of establishment of United Nations peace-keeping operation in Yugoslavia upon recommendation from Secretary-General.

- Secretary-General concludes official visit to Spain.

- European Community admitted to Food and Agriculture Organization, becoming first regional economic integration organization to join specialized United Nation Agency.

- Special Political Committee concludes work for its current session by adopting a number of drafts.

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The Security Council has urged the Yugoslav parties to comply fully with the agreement on an immediate cease-fire, which was signed in Geneva on 23 November. It further endorsed the statement made by Mr. Vance, Personal Envoy of the Secretary-General to Yugoslavia, in Geneva that the deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation could not be envisaged without the full compliance by all parties with the cease-fire agreement.

The Council took that decision this afternoon by adopting unanimously resolution 721 (1991) saying that it would take appropriate action without delay upon the Secretary-General's recommendation for the establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping force in Yugoslavia.

The Council also expressed hope that the Secretary-General and Mr. Vance would pursue their contacts with the Yugoslav parties as soon as possible so that the Secretary-General could present early recommendations to the Council, including for a peace-keeping force.

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For information media—not an official record

The Council convened in response to requests by Germany and France for an urgent meeting on the situation in Yugoslavia, and to a letter from Yugoslavia, dated 26 November, asking for the establishment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation in that country.

The Permanent Representative of Yugoslavia, Darko Silovic, asked that the Council act promptly and take the necessary decision for the deployment of such a force as soon as possible. He said the Yugoslav Government highly appreciated the persevering efforts of Mr. Vance who, he said, had the full confidence and support of all parties. The Yugoslav Ambassador stated that the immediate return of Mr. Vance to Yugoslavia should enable the conclusion of consultations on the establishment of a peace-keeping operation -- one that was necessary for reaching a peaceful solution within the framework of the Hague Conference on Yugoslavia, chaired by Lord Carrington.

A United Nations spokesman announced earlier today that Mr. Vance had held talks this morning with senior Secretariat officials at Headquarters and that he was scheduled to return to Yugoslavia on Saturday, 30 November.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar met this morning in Madrid with the President of the Popular Party, José Maria Aznar, with whom he discussed the current situation in Yugoslavia, Western Sahara, and the United Nations involvement in the region and Central America, in particular, El Salvador.

The Secretary-General then attended a ceremony for the presentation of a book edited by the Spanish Defence Ministry entitled "Peace-keeping Forces: Spanish Military Staff in the World", and made brief remarks on the significance of the Spanish contribution to various peace-keeping forces throughout the world. Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar then left Madrid for Paris.

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The European Economic Community (EEC) was today admitted to membership of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), becoming the first regional economic integration organization to join a United Nations specialized agency.

The EEC's membership became possible after the 160-nation Conference, in session since November 9, amended basic texts to allow membership in FAO by regional economic integration organizations. The Conference then agreed to take up the EEC's application during its current session, waiving a requirement that would have delayed the vote on membership until the next Conference in 1993.

"The accession of the EEC as a member of our organization is a momentous decision for FAO", Edouard Saouma, FAO Director-General, told the Conference. He said FAO could offer EEC "its unique knowledge of the rural world", its ongoing examination of the food and nutritional situation, and its presence more or less everywhere in the world.

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From now on, EEC will be entitled to participate in any FAO meeting,; its votes will equal the number of its member States; and, when EEC exercises its right to vote, EEC member States will not vote.

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The General Assembly's Special Political Committee today concluded its work for the forty-sixth session.

The Committee was expected to take action on a number of draft resolutions. Among those were two draft texts submitted by the Committee on Information, as well as a draft decision by which the Assembly would expand that Committee from 78 to 79 members and appoint Burkina Faso as a new member.

The Committee was also to conclude its consideration of the report of the Special Committee to Investigate Israeli practices Affecting the Human Rights of the Palestinian People and Other Arabs of the Occupied Territories and take action on seven drafts on that question.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

Prepared by Central News

DH/1028
29 November 1991

FRIDAY HIGHLIGHTS

◆ Secretary-General's Special Envoy on Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance, to return to that country tomorrow for talks on deployment of a possible United Nations peace-keeping operation; will report to the Secretary-General within one week.

◆ Security Council unanimously renews the mandate of United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF).

◆ Head of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia, Ataul Karim, to represent the Organization at a meeting of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia in Bangkok on 3 December.

◆ In a message on the Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian people, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar reminds international community of enduring commitment of the United Nations to the attainment of the inalienable rights of the Palestinian People; President of the General Assembly also sends message.

◆ Secretary-General granted the Grand Croix of the Légion d'Honneur in Paris by President François Mitterrand; leaves Paris for Portugal before return to New York over the weekend.

◆ Political and Security Committee concludes work for current session with its Chairman noting it had unequivocally opted for reconciliation, compromise and concerted action.

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Cyrus Vance, the Secretary-General's Personal Envoy on Yugoslavia, accompanied by Under Secretary-General Marrack Goulding and a team of United Nations officials, leave New York for Yugoslavia on Saturday, 30 November, to continue discussions with the principal parties to the conflict regarding the deployment of a possible United Nations peace-keeping operation in that country.

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For information media—not an official record

A United Nations Spokeswoman said today that during the scheduled talks the parties would consider "the shape, size, and deployment of the mission " in the context of the mandate given to the mission by Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar and endorsed by the Security Council in resolution 721, which was adopted on 27 November 1991. That resolution had also urged the parties to comply with the cease-fire accord signed in Geneva on 23 November during which Mr. Vance stressed that no peace-keeping operation could be envisaged without a lasting ceasefire.

Mr. Vance is expected to return to New York within one week to report to the Secretary-General, who in turn would report to the Security Council.

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The Security Council this morning unanimously decided to renew the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) for another period of six months, ending 31 May 1992. The Council also called on the parties concerned -- Israel and Syria, to implement immediately Security Council resolution 338, which calls for a cease-fire and agreement on disengagement between Israeli and Syrian forces. The Council also requested the Secretary-General to submit, at the end of this period of renewal, a report on the developments in the situation and the measures taken to implement resolution 338.

The President of the Council, Aurel Munteanu of Romania, quoted the Secretary-General's report to the Council on UNDOF, in which Mr Pérez de Cuéllar had noted that despite the present quiet in the Israel-Syria sector, the situation in the Middle East as a whole continued to be potentially dangerous and was likely to remain so, unless and until a comprehensive settlement covering all aspects of the Middle East problem could be reached.

The United Nations Disengagement Observer Force was established in 1974.

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The Chief Liaison Officer and Head of the United Nations Advance Mission in Cambodia Mr. A.H.S. Ataul Karim will be representing the United Nations at a meeting of the Supreme National Council of Cambodia (SNC), scheduled for Tuesday 3 December in Bangkok. A United Nations Spokeswoman said the meeting was suggested by Prince Sihanouk as a result of recent events in Cambodia which related to the issue of the implementation of the Paris agreement.

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In a message to the Committee on the Exercise of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People (CEIRP), on the International Day of Solidarity with the Palestinian People, Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar reminded the international community of the enduring commitment of the United Nations to the attainment of the Inalienable Rights of the Palestinian People and to a comprehensive, just and lasting settlement in the Middle East.

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The Secretary-General also recalled that he had always maintained that no effort should be spared in the search for a comprehensive settlement of the Arab-Israeli conflict and the issue that lies at its core: the yearning of the Palestinian people to exercise their legitimate political rights, including self-determination.

In his message read to the Committee by James Jonah, Assistant-Secretary-General for the Department of Special Political Affairs, the Secretary-General also emphasized that there had been few issues to which he had attached greater importance than the search for peace in the Middle East and the just resolution of the Question of Palestine. He further expressed hope that the momentum that has been generated by the Madrid talks would be sustained and that the lasting peace that had so long been denied to all the peoples of the Middle East would become a reality.

In his statement to the Committee on the same occasion, the President of the General Assembly, Samir S. Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, said that it was incumbent upon all of us, and in particular for the United Nations, to keep the search for a political solution of the Question of Palestine high on the international agenda. Now more than ever before, he said, it was imperative for the United Nations to play a central role in this process.

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The Spokesman of the Secretary-General said that Mr. Javier Pérez de Cuéllar was granted yesterday, 28 November in Paris, France's highest honour, the "Grand Croix" of the Légion d'Honneur by President François Mitterrand. The ceremony, which was attended by Foreign Minister Roland Dumas, was followed by a luncheon at the Elysée Palace.

Also yesterday, the Secretary-General, who is a member of the French Academy of Political and Moral Sciences, attended the installation of a new member of the Academy. He also met with the French Senate President and later attended a reception in his honour at the French Diplomatic Academy.

This morning, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar left Paris for Oporto, Portugal, on a private visit on his way back to New York, where he is expected over the weekend.

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The Assembly's Political and Security (First) Committee has concluded its work for this session, after considering all items on its agenda.
In concluding remarks, Committee Chairman Robert Mroziewicz of Poland, said the constructive approach taken by representatives had demonstrated prudence and the desire not to detract attention from vital problems of disarmament by interjecting new "non-pragmatic" issues. He said that by acknowledging the shifting realities of the 1990's, the Committee had "unequivocally opted for reconciliation, compromise and concerted action".

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The Chairman said the Committee had not merely reacted to the rapid changes in the field of disarmament, but had seized a critical opportunity in the post-cold-war period to map out the disarmament for the future. In doing so, he added, the Committee was widening its scope from the traditional nuclear issues to encompass matters such as proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, conventional armaments and regional disarmament. Representatives of regional groups also made closing statements.

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United Nations

Daily Highlights

Department of Public Information • Central News Section • New York

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DH/1029
2 December 1991

MONDAY HIGHLIGHTS

♦ Secretary-General, welcoming release of American hostage Joseph Cicippio, says he is working on the freeing of all hostages and detainees before end of December.

♦ Secretary-General's Personal Envoy, Cyrus Vance, meets Yugoslav parties in Belgrade; will call for return of European Community-led monitors to Dubrovnik.

♦ Differing approaches to ongoing changes in South Africa are advocated as General Assembly opens debate on apartheid; European Community defends lifting certain sanctions while others question removing pressure that had led to gains.

♦ Secretary-General informs President of Portugal of his decision to send Special Rapporteur of Human Rights Commission to East Timor to get "impartial" information about "tragic" events in Santa Cruz, on 12 November.

♦ Secretary-General reports recent increase in tension and hostilities in area of United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon; Irish soldier, killed on 15 November, is 101st casualty suffered by that Force.

♦ Social Committee says United Nations assistance in electoral processes is needed only in special circumstances.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar told correspondents this morning that he hoped other hostage releases would follow the freeing of American hostage Joseph Cicippio. He said he hoped the release of two other American hostages held in Lebanon, Alann Steen and Terry Anderson, were not too far away.

In reply to questions by correspondents, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said that he, personally, was paying the bill for the releases by exposing one of his "dearest colleagues to a very difficult situation". The Secretary-General was

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referring to Giandomenico Picco, his Personal Representative, who has been negotiating with the parties concerned about the release of all detainees. Mr. Picco "is there on the spot and he is risking a lot", the Secretary-General said.

In reply to another question, Mr. Pérez de Cuéllar said it would be a disappointment for him personally if the remaining hostages were not released before the end of December. He said he had already been in touch with people in the region to accelerate the release of the two remaining Americans as well as two German detainees. He was also working on the missing Israeli persons and on the number of Lebanese who are detained in the southern part of Lebanon.

Yesterday, it was announced at Headquarters that important progress had been made with regard to a solution of the issue of the Western hostages in Lebanon. Basic understanding had also been reached on a comprehensive approach to the remaining humanitarian issues, including that of the Lebanese detained without due process of law and that of the Israelis missing and dead in Lebanon.

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The Secretary-General's Personal Envoy to Yugoslavia, Cyrus Vance, was scheduled to meet today in Belgrade with General Kadijevic, Secretary of State for the National Defence of the Yugoslav Federal Army and Serbian President Milosevic.

A United Nations spokesman told correspondents today that while in Belgrade, Mr. Vance was expected to urge all concerned to facilitate the return of the European Community-led monitors to Dubrovnik.

In comments to the press yesterday, Mr. Vance had underlined that the Yugoslav parties must comply with the provisions of Wednesday's Security Council resolution 721 (1991), which conditioned the deployment of a United Nations peace-keeping operation, with the full compliance by the Yugoslav parties, with the cease-fire agreement signed in Geneva on 23 November.

Also yesterday, Mr. Vance met with the local representative of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and was briefed on the accelerating relief operation to displaced persons.

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"Apartheid is not yet dead", the Chairman of the Special Committee against Apartheid this morning told the General Assembly, as he opened the Assembly's debate on South Africa's racial policies.

Describing the political process inside South Africa as "halting, but sustained", Ibrahim A. Gambari (Nigeria), said the ultimate goal of eliminating apartheid had not yet been reached and the role of the international community was far from over, including its assistance in bringing to an end a climate of violence that threatened the democratic

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transition. Some States, he added, had been hasty in removing pressure on South Africa, pressure that had yielded great dividends in the past and should be maintained.

A few speakers this morning, however, defended the relaxation of certain sanctions against South Africa as a recognition of the progress that had been made in dismantling apartheid. For example, the representative of the Netherlands, speaking on behalf of the European Community, said that outdated statements, doctrines and resolutions benefited only those opposed to the process of democratic change in South Africa. The Assembly, he added, should reflect the positive developments and send a "signal of encouragement and hope" to all South Africans.

The Assembly is scheduled to consider tomorrow, 3 December, the appointment of the next Secretary-General before continuing its debate on apartheid. On Wednesday, 4 December, at 3 p.m., the Assembly will hear a statement by Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar about the financial crisis facing the United Nations. It will then continue its debate on apartheid.

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Secretary-General Javier Pérez de Cuéllar has informed the President of Portugal, Mario Soares, of his intention to send a special emissary to East Timor to obtain "impartial" information about the incident in Santa Cruz on 12 November, at which over one hundred people were killed.

Before leaving Lisbon for New York over the weekend, the Secretary-General told the press that he had explained to the Portuguese President that the United Nations continued its work towards a "clear, independent and absolutely impartial outcome on the facts surrounding the tragic and very serious events in Santa Cruz."

The Secretary-General said he was sending Mr. Amos Waco, the Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Commission on Arbitrary Executions to East Timor and that he hoped the Indonesian Government would provide him with all the necessary facilities in order to fulfil his mission in "a perfectly impartial and independent way".

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The Secretary-General has informed the Security Council, in a special report dated 29 November, of the circumstances under which an Irish soldier of the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL) was killed on 15 November. He was the one hundred and first casualty suffered by the UNIFIL as a result of hostile action or duty-related accidents and the twenty first such casualty suffered by the Irish contingent.

According to the Secretary-General's report, the incident has been strongly protested to the Israeli authorities both locally and in New York. It occurred in a period of heightened tension and hostilities between the

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Israeli Defence Force and armed Lebanese elements in the UNIFIL area of operation. The UNIFIL was conducting a full investigation but has already established that no weapon was fired by any UNIFIL soldiers and that the United Nations was not therefore responsible for the death of the Irish soldier.

The Secretary-General said in his report that in order to reduce hostilities and prevent additional casualties in the Force, he had proposed to the Israeli Government that it withdraw its personnel from the most affected positions, which would then be taken over by the UNIFIL.

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The General Assembly's Third Committee (Social, Humanitarian and Cultural) approved on Friday a draft resolution noting that United Nations assistance in electoral processes was needed only in special circumstances.

Under the text, the Assembly would reaffirm that it was the concern solely of the peoples to determine methods and to establish institutions regarding the electoral process and that any activities that attempted to interfere in the free development of that process violated the spirit and letter of the Charter. The draft would also have the Assembly recognize that there was no universal need for the United Nations to provide electoral assistance to Member States except in special circumstances and would strongly appeal to States to refrain from financing or providing any other form of overt or covert support to undermine the electoral process in any country.

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